

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1-6 are currently being prosecuted. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider his rejections in view of the amendments and remarks as set forth below.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103

Claims 1-3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over to Stites (U.S. Patent No. 6,324,330). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Examiner states that Stites shows an optical member for gathering light having a body (110a-c) with an incident face (120), a first reflecting surface (110Ea), a second reflecting surface (110Fb₁) and an emergent surface (140), where light enters the body from the incident surface, forms a total reflection and passes through the emergent surface. The Examiner admitted that Stites does not show an optical member used in a plane image input device. Applicants disagree that the present amended claims are obvious over Stites.

The claims are now been amended to further define over the reference. In particular, the incident surface and the emergent surface are now described as being curved. Also, in new claims 4-6, which are similar to claims 1-3, respectively, the plane image input device is specifically described. The Examiner has admitted that Stites does not show such a plane image input device. For the above reasons, Applicants submit that the claims are not anticipated by obvious over Stites.

KM/RFG/vd

It is furthermore noted that the Stites reference is related to a folded light tunnel apparatus to provide light with a high degree of spatial uniformity in a compact arrangement. The Stites device includes a plurality of prisms having a different cross-sectional dimension and at least one beveled end. This prior art provides for the transmission of light. However, this does not teach how to apply light to a plane image input device to increase the brightness of document and increase the scanning efficiencies at high speed.

This is different from the present invention which provides an optical member for gathering light to fully utilize the light emitted from the light source and increase the brightness of the document and this increase scanning efficiency at high speed. When in use, one side of the light source emits light which gathers the body through the incident surface and forms a total reflection inside the body. First, the light is projected directly onto the first reflecting surface and is reflected to the second reflecting surface which further reflects the light to the emergent surface in order to project onto the document. The body includes a curved incident surface and a curved emergent surface which increases reflection efficiency. By using the body on one side of the light source and a standard reflector on the other side, the light emitted from the light source is more fully utilized. This increases the brightness of the document and scanning efficiency.

For these reasons, Applicants submit that the present claimed invention is not anticipated by Stites and would not be obvious there over.

CONCLUSION

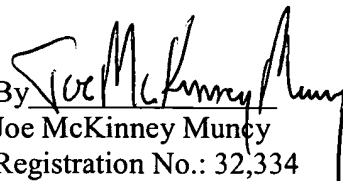
In view of the above remarks, it is believed that the claims clearly distinguish over the patents relied on by the Examiner, either alone or in combination. In view of this, reconsideration of the rejections and allowance of all the claims are respectfully requested.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Robert F. Gnuse (Reg. No. 27,295) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: January 4, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

4/17
By 
Joe McKinney Muncy
Registration No.: 32,334
BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP
8110 Gatehouse Road
Suite 100 East
P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000
Attorney for Applicant

KM/RFG/vd